

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A method of securely delivering to a delivery destination a tote for holding an item, the method comprising:

5 providing a tote comprising a cover, a main structure, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote, including a first of the pair of eyelets on exterior of the cover and a second of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the first eyelet;

delivering the tote to a delivery destination; and

10 securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination by connecting a securing means to a mounting means substantially at the delivery destination and looping a portion of the securing means through the pair of eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of securing the tote comprises securing the securing means to a storage container mounted in proximity to the delivery destination, and the method further comprises holding the securing means inside the storage container when the securing means is not in use.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the securing means comprises a plurality of sections, wherein the step of connecting the securing means comprises securing a first end of a first section of the plurality of sections to the mounting means, and wherein the step of looping a portion of the securing means comprises looping a first end of a second section of the plurality of sections

through and around the first and second eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote, and further comprising:

connecting a third section of the plurality of sections to one of the first mounting means and a second mounting means proximate the first mounting means;

locking a second end of the third section to a second end of the second section with a first lock that may be opened by a customer; and

after looping the first end of the second section around the first and second eyelets, locking the first end of the second section to a second end of the first section with a second lock that may be opened by a delivery person.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

the customer retrieving the tote by unlocking the first lock and removing the looped section of the securing means from the first and second eyelets.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a second pair of eyelets on a second side of the tote, including a third eyelet on the exterior of the cover and a fourth eyelet on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the third eyelet; and looping a second securing means through the third and fourth eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote on the second side.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a hinge on a second side of the tote to connect the cover to the main structure of the tote.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising placing a grocery item into the tote and maintaining the grocery item at a desired temperature by placing a frozen insert in the tote in proximity to the grocery item.

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8. The method of claim 1, further comprising placing a grocery item into the tote and maintaining the grocery item at a desired temperature by feeding a chilled gas into at least a portion of the tote.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a second tote comprising a second cover, a second main structure, and a second pair of eyelets on an exterior of the second tote, including a third of the second pair of eyelets on an exterior of the cover and a fourth of the second pair of eyelets on the exterior of the second main structure substantially in proximity to the third eyelet; and

looping the securing means through the second pair of eyelets to tighten the second cover to the second main structure.

10. A system for securely delivering to a delivery destination a tote for holding an item, comprising:

a tote comprising a cover, a main structure, and a pair of eyelets on an exterior of the tote, including a first of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the cover and a second of the pair of eyelets on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the first eyelet; and

a securing means for securing the tote substantially at the delivery destination by looping a portion of the securing means through the pair of eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote.

5 11. The system of claim 10, further comprising a storage container mounted in proximity to the delivery destination for holding the securing means when the securing means is not used to secure the tote, and wherein the securing means comprises means for securing the tote to the storage container.

10 12. The system of claim 10, wherein the storage container comprises a box.

15 13. The system of claim 10, wherein the securing means comprises one of a chain and cable.

 14. The system of claim 10, wherein the securing means comprises a plurality of sections, a first end of a first section of the plurality of sections being securable to the mounting means, and a first end of a second section of the plurality of sections being loopable through and around the first and second eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote, and further comprising:

20 a second mounting means proximate the first mounting means;
 means for connecting a third section of the plurality of sections to one of the first mounting means and the second mounting means;

a first lock which may be used by a customer for locking a second end of the third section to a second end of the second section; and

a second lock which may be used by a delivery person for locking the first end of the second section to a second end of the first section, after looping the first end of the second section
5 around the first and second eyelets.

15. The system of claim 10, further comprising a second pair of eyelets on a second side of the tote, including a third eyelet on the exterior of the cover and a fourth eyelet on the exterior of the main structure substantially in proximity to the third eyelet; and means for looping a second securing means through the third and fourth eyelets to securely tighten the cover to the main structure of the tote on the second side.

16. The system of claim 10, further comprising
a hinge on a second side of the tote to connect the cover to the main structure of the
15 tote.

17. The system of claim 10, further comprising a second tote comprising a cover, a main structure and a second pair of eyelets, and wherein the securing means further comprises means for securing the cover of the second tote to the main structure by looping the
20 securing means through and around the second pair of eyelets.